

Dear Chairs Lemar and Haskell, Vice Chairs Cassano and Simms, Ranking Members Carney and Somers, and Members of the Transportation Committee:

My name is Julia Sulkowski and I am a resident of New Haven. I'm writing to communicate my strong support for **S.B. 4 and H.B. 5381 - Acts Concerning the Connecticut Clean Air Act**. These bills would expand the use of electric vehicles in both the private and public sectors of the Connecticut economy and provide funds to help enforce the federal Clean Air Act. This is particularly important for combating climate change, particularly greenhouse gas emissions, ozone depletion, and smog particulate matter, because the transportation sector has had the highest emissions within the Connecticut economy every year since 1990. The state government has concluded that reducing transportation emissions is critical to meeting our goal of reducing emissions 45% below 2001 levels by 2030.

As of 2018, there were just over 17,000 out of 1.3 million vehicles registered in Connecticut that are electric. Estimates suggest that in order to reach the 2030 goal, that number will have to increase to around 500,000. The current Connecticut Hydrogen and Electric Automobile Purchase Rebate (CHEAPR) program is a good start, but it is underfunded and will not do nearly enough. Both bills include the "federal Clean Air Act fee," a continual payment to register or renew non-electric vehicles to individuals under the age of 65, which incentivizes the purchase of electric vehicles. The money collected from this fee will be used to implement infrastructure that promotes electric vehicle use, as well as contributing to the Clean Air Act account, which also directs money to sustainability initiatives. Thus, the federal Clean Air Act fee incentivizes electric vehicle use in both the consumer and infrastructure spheres. By expanding the funding available to CHEAPR, S.B. 4 and H.B. 5381 will help us get on pace to meet that goal of 500,000 electric vehicles in Connecticut, and help us solve the problem of persistent emissions in the transportation sector.

Write one or two more brief paragraphs expanding upon one or more of the following options (I've included general talking points and statistics for you to choose from):

8 years ago my parents saved to buy an electric car. We were lucky enough to have gotten into an amazing school system but had to commute 30 minutes there every morning to take advantage of this opportunity. My selfless mom would drive 100+ miles a day making sure my brothers and I were always on time. Having an electric car was not only a great act toward the environment but was crucial in saving money on gas for my family.

This bill would help support Connecticut's goals in electric transportation. S.B. 4 sets up a grant program to help fund new EV charging stations, and promotes their construction in both residential and non-residential buildings. It's difficult to see how Connecticut can hit its 500,000 electric vehicle target without increasing the availability of charging stations.

This also will help improve traffic, engine run time and decrease emissions. S.B. 4 will also provide \$75 million over five years for updating traffic signals to help people have to spend less time

sitting at stoplights. Less time spent in traffic means less time with your car engine running, which in turn means less emissions. Plus, it's always nice to not have to spend your whole day waiting at red lights.

There are significant differences in motor versus electric emissions. Both bills identify the “federal Clean Air Act fee” that charges \$15 for a 3-year registration, \$10 for a 2-year registration, and \$5 for a one-year registration of non-electric vehicles. This fee provides only a small incentive for those looking to buy their first vehicle and may not want to pay an annual fee on a non-electric bill. I propose that all or a greater portion of the funds raised from the federal Clean Air Act fee go directly to the Special Transportation Fund, so there is increased transparency on how this money is spent. Currently, 57.5% goes to the Special Transportation Fund, which is spent on sustainable infrastructure initiatives, but 42.5% goes to the General Fund, which can be spent however the CGA sees fit. The money raised from this tax and deposited in the General Fund is likely not spent on its initial goal of sustainable development. H.B. 5381 amends this so that the 42.5% of the funds from the fee will go to a federal Clean Air Act account, so that the money will be directly spent on environmental initiatives with increased transparency, both encouraging sustainability and public trust in the government.

In conclusion, I urge you to take these steps to help move Connecticut towards a sustainable economy. The costs of climate change are enormous, from rising sea levels that endanger coastal homes, to loss of natural wonders that future generations will never enjoy, to more frequent freak weather events that can devastate communities. The EPA has reported that temperatures in Connecticut have been rising twice as fast as the rest of the US, which leads to increased flooding due to more intense rainfall. But if we act now, there is still time. I urge you to favorably vote S.B. 4 and H.B. 5381 out of the Transportation Committee to help decarbonize our economy and protect our future.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Julia Sulkowski
New Haven, CT